

# News Release



**For Immediate Release**

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## Elephant Seals in Every Classroom

Governor Davis Launches [www.ca.gov/](http://www.ca.gov/) your online link to California

**SACRAMENTO** – Governor Gray Davis today announced the launch of a one-stop California Web Portal that will offer Californians access to an expanded array of online information and state services, including the new web page at California State Parks, found by going to the Governor's *My California*, located at [www.ca.gov](http://www.ca.gov/).

"Today, with the launch of our new *My California* homepage, we are using web technology to personalize government in a way no other state has ever done", Governor Davis said. "With advice from the best minds in the Silicon Valley, we have developed an Internet site that makes it simple to register cars, check up on schools' academic performance, get live pictures of our state parks, and much more. Our seamless, state-of-the-art web portal, [my.ca.gov](http://my.ca.gov/), is your online link to California."

Within the Governor's homepage, California State Parks will take Californians to places their home and classroom computers have never gone before, to the thousands of 2 ½ ton Elephant Seals at Año Nuevo State Reserve, south of San Francisco. On Tuesday, this system will be unveiled for the very first time, in a premiere demonstration, which will include live pictures of the seals from Año Nuevo and a State Park Ranger in a live question and answer talk-back with students.

**Demonstration of *My California* bringing Elephant Seals Live, to any Classroom**

*10 AM – Tuesday, January 9, 2001*

*Mitchell Middle School*

*2100 Zinfandel Drive*

*Rancho Cordova*

State Parks Director Rusty Areias said: "Thousands of kids visit the elephant seals every year. But there are still thousands more who are too far away or who can't afford to make the trip, and this

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**California State Parks on the Internet: <<http://www.parks.ca.gov/>>**

new tool is a kind of field trip brought right into their classroom. It is a way in which we can partner with teachers all across the state to improve the education of our kids and that is very exciting to us.”

At Año Nuevo, State Parks has installed two live cameras mounted in the midst of the largest mainland breeding colony of Northern Elephant Seals in the world. On Tuesday, the Folsom-Cordova School District, State Parks and the kids of Mitchell Middle School in Rancho Cordova, will demonstrate how they can bring the Seals into their classroom. With the seals will be State Park Ranger Gary Strachan, who will be able to do a live, talkback, and question and answer period of instruction with the children. This system, never done before, provides a means to bring a live, educational TV field trip to any classroom in the state.

*My California* also allows Californians to personalize the portal for quickest access to those items they use most while ensuring their privacy. The new portal also provides powerful search functions to speed and simplify access to state services and information.

But there is more, State Parks is also providing a number of other services, as highlighted below:

1. **Free day-use pass** – In celebration of the new web site, visitors can print a complimentary pass, available for a limited time only, directly from the site. Simply print the coupon and present it at any participating California State Park.
2. **Annual Day-Use Pass** – For the first time ever, you can now purchase the \$35 annual day-use pass on-line and it is now transferable.
3. **E-Store** – Offers the convenience of shopping online for unique park merchandise.
4. **Camping Reservations** – Start planning your summer vacation and make your camping reservations online now.
5. **Año Nuevo** – As you have read above, view live pictures of the largest northern elephant seal colony in the world.

In September 2000, the governor announced an “eGovernment” initiative designed to use the power of technology to bring state government closer to California citizens and businesses. In an Executive Order released by Governor Davis on September 21, 2000, the Governor called for the development of a new state government portal that offers a one-stop access point for all state government information and services. This “Parks TV”, live from Año Nuevo State Reserve, is just one example of how the governor’s initiative will open the doors of government to more Californians.

As State Parks Director Areias put it: “This *Parks TV*, live from Año Nuevo State Reserve, is just one example of how the Governor’s initiative will open the doors of government to more Californians. And in the future,” said Areias, “look for us to be putting more live TV cameras at other places, like Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park, where we have a number of Roosevelt Elk that could be televised to classrooms around the state. We are closely aligned with the Governor in our desire to bring more services to people, in the best user-friendly way possible.”

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**California State Parks on the Internet: <<http://www.parks.ca.gov>>**